M'Keithen Aide Denies Partin Move

S-1 6-21-69

Gremillion Insists Cash Cut

By GENE BOURG

Atty. Gen. Jack P. F. Gremillion today reinforced his claim that Gov. John J. McKeithen has not provided adequate funds for state attempts to prosecute Baton Rouge labor figure Edward Grady Partin, despite a denial from the governor's office.

Gremillion said the governor's office last December withdrew funds from the attorney general's office amounting to about $4,000 monthly, used in assisting the State Labor - Management Commission in its investigatory work.

Partin was indicted by a federal grand jury yesterday on five counts charging conspiracy and extortion. The Labor-Management Commission had been investigating Partin's labor activities in the Baton Rouge area.

"WE DID OUR best until we got the rug pulled out from under us. The governor is responsible. He took my money away," said Gremillion.

The governor's chief assistant, W. W. McDougall, countered that McKeithen "hasn't pulled the rug out from under anybody."

McDougall said that no money was taken from Gremillion's budget and added the governor "has exerted every possible effort on everybody concerned to see that any case of violation of of the law is prosecuted as vigorously as possible."

THE CUT IN funds, said Gremillion, came when Assistant Atty. Gen. Thomas McFerrin was fired as chief counsel for the Labor-Management Commission.

McFerrin was given leave from his duties in the attorney general's office to work with the commission, Gremillion said. He added the governor had "assured me that ample funds would be provided for this purpose."

"I don't know what made the governor change his mind," the attorney general said.

THE MONTHLY fund provided for salaries and expenses of investigating attorneys and special assistant Ken Scullin, said Gremillion. Bills were provided the commission by Gremillion's office, he added, and were kept by the Division of Administration.

"Four or five convictions were secured as a result of our work," said Gremillion. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling making the federal constitutional right to a jury trial in criminal cases binding on the states "slowed down" labor racketeering prosecutions, he said.

One of the principal factors in McFerrin's dismissal was said to be the Labor-Management Commission's reorganization in line with a Civil Service Commission ruling setting up a new investigative section at a much lower pay rate than the original staff was receiving.

M'FERRIN WAS replaced by Edward J. Roussel, who has since announced his intention of leaving. Roussel, who previously had been on the commission staff, was shifted to the state police before being given the post as commission counsel.

In its action yesterday, the Federal Grand Jury indicted Ted F. Dunham Jr. on the same charges filed against Partin. Three Baton Rouge concrete products firms which Dunham controls also were indicted.

Partin, business manager of Teamster Local No. 5 in Baton Rouge, has been a figure in state and federal

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